

Special Board of Selectmen special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 6, 2018, 7:30pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present: Superintendent Dr. William McKersie, Board of Education Chair Gina Albert, WPS Finance Director Richard Rudl, First Selectman Chris Spaulding, Selectmen Brian Gordon and Stephan Grozinger, Town Administrator Jonathan Luiz, Administrative Assistant Randi Derene, Members of the Board of Education, Weston Public School Staff and Weston Residents

This meeting was videotaped and can be viewed on Channel 79 and on our Town of Weston website.

- 1- **Call to order:** 7:30pm
- 2- **Pledge of Allegiance** – led by Gina Albert
- 3- **Board of Selectmen review Board of Education's 2018-19 Budget Request**

Mr. Spaulding thanked the school administration for their efforts and hard work.

Ms. Albert spoke about some of the budget highlights, including special education, theatre program, OPEB funding, and an overall 3.4 percent increase in budget.

Dr. McKersie stated this is a budget for everyone and explained we are in fiscal crisis with the goal being proactive not reactive.

Mr. Rudl presented a power point (see attached). He explained some of the highlights in Special Education, increases in contracts, reductions in health insurance, staffing changes, increase in technology and summed it up by saying they show an overall reduction in budget not including Special Ed Services. Outplacements were discussed.

Mr. Spaulding brought up some questions about outplacements. Discussion ensued regarding projected number of outplacements for 2018-19.

Ms. Albert spoke about how important the staffing is for students in the Special Education program. Mr. Grozinger asked if exit interviews are performed when students are outplaced. Dr. McKersie and Special Education Director Lois Pernice explained that they do not happen, but information is collected in other ways. Dr. McKersie added that they will look into putting these exit interviews into place to find out why students are leaving and what improvements can be made here to keep outplacements down.

Mr. Spaulding discussed FTE (full time employees). Ms. Albert and Dr. McKersie explained that if they had to cut FTE's it would affect programming. Dr. McKersie explained this would be worst case scenario and hopes to avoid having to make those decisions. Mr. Gordon discussed the World Language program and it's efficacy of starting at early grades.

Mr. Spaulding brought up revenues such as parking fees, athletic fees and technology revenue through grants.

Mr. Spaulding then discussed logistics of the math labs in the Middle School. Principle Doak discussed the importance of the program and changes that are being made going forward.

Ms. Albert discussed the proposal of Mock Trial being moved to an after school program.

Mr. Rudl discussed the Xenon plant and the maintenance work that will need to be done. He explained that an RFP will be going out soon for a new operating company. Mr. Rudl explained that a perspective company has recommended replacing the membranes in Fiscal Year 2019-20.

IT Director, Craig Tunks discussed how the technology subscriptions work and reviewed what hardware will need to be purchased and how the cycle works.

Mr. Spaulding asked about the role of the WPS payroll coordinator and the possibility of sharing services. Mr. Rudl explained that their payroll coordinator deals with benefits as well and would have no capacity for sharing services. Mr. Luiz confirmed the Town also did not have capacity for sharing the position.

Mr. Spaulding brought up the reduction in exterior lighting. Mr. Rudl spoke about the schools 10 year plan of LED lighting upgrades.

Mr. Tunks reviewed the status of all copiers and spoke of how they are strategically located throughout the schools. He stated that overall the copiers are all updated and have scanning abilities.

Mr. Rudl spoke about Insurance Claims and the proposed change in health plans for next year.

Mr. Grozinger asked about the increase in PPS positions. Dr. McKersie explained how staff is needed to address the complex needs of some of the special education students. Ms. Pernice explained it is more cost effective to have this staff in the building then contracting part time outside help or outplacing these students.

Dr. McKersie referenced a letter from January 22nd regarding Special education/pupil services (See attached).

Mr. Grozinger asked if anyone has looked into worst case scenario of having to make more cuts, and if so, what programs would be cut. Dr. McKersie replied yes they are prepared.

Mr. Grozinger asked about changes to the theatre program. Ms. Albert explained the only change is that they are encouraging Company to have control over the money earned via fundraisers. She said it would be a parent run board, similar to how Boosters is run.

Mr. Grozinger asked for clarification between non certified expenses and certified expenses. Mr. Rudl explained some non-certified staff examples would be custodians and para professionals and examples of certified staff would be teachers and principals.

In closing, Mr. Gordon asked the Board of Education to think about continuing to be tough as they look through contracts, being prepared with a list of possible cuts on the sidelines, and look into the concept of private funding for public needs

Mr. .Grozinger moved to recommend the FY 2018/19 Board of Education Operating Budget of \$51,626,536 as presented by the Board of Education to the Board of Selectmen, be transmitted to the Board of Finance. Mr. Gordon seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- 4- **Adjourn-** Mr. Gordon moved to adjourn at 9:56pm. Mr. Grozinger seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Randi Derene, Administrative Assistant